

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9066

USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: BEXP, BU, UR

SUBJECT: 1975 PLOVDIV FAIR

USDOC FOR BEWT (THOMPSON)

REF: A) SOFIA1968 (NOTAL); B) STATE 1190; C) SOFIA 2185 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY WISHES TO RESTRESS IMPORTANCE OF U.S. PARTICIPATION AT PLOVDIV INTERNATIONAL FAIR, WHICH IS LARGEST SINGLE USG ACTIVITY CONDUCTED IN BULGARIA. IT AFFORDS A TESTED OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE US EXPORTS AS WELL AS TO PRESENT FAVORABLE IMAGE OF US TO OVER QUARTER MILLION PEOPLE.

2. RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF CAREFUL PLANNING AND PREPARATION, EMBASSY SUBMITTED ITS THEME PROPOSAL (REFTEL A) TO WASHINGTON MORE THAN TWO MONTHS AGO. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THEME PROPOSAL, "FOOD PROCESSING AND PACKAGING" BE RETAINED.

IT REPRESENTED CONSIDERED JUDGMENT OF MISSION AFTER CONSULTATION WITH BULGARIAN EXPERTS AND LEADING OFFICIALS

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THAT THIS IS THE RIGHT THEME AT RIGHT TIME.

3. EMBASSY CAN SEE BENEFIT IN INCLUSION OF TOBACCO CULTIVATION, PROCESSING AND PACKING EQUIPMENT IN 1975 EXHIBIT BUT WOULD SUGGEST THAT IT NOT BE CENTRAL FOCUS OF THEME AND DISPLAY.

4. AS REGARDS PARA 2 REFTEL B, PLOVDIV ALWAYS ATTRACTS INTERNATIONAL BUYERS AND SPECIALISTS, PARTICULARLY FROM EASTERN EUROPE AND SOVIET UNION, OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LONG-RANGE CONTRACTS AND EXPOSURE OF US PRODUCTS. ON THE WHOLE, WE BELIEVE PROSPECTS FOR SALES AND CONTACTS WOULD BE EQUALLY AS GOOD IN PLOVDIV AS IN MOSCOW. THERE IS HUGE MARKET IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE USSR, AND TO BE EXPOSED IN TWO PLACES WOULD ONLY ENHANCE SALES OPPORTUNITIES WHILE ADDING LITTLE TO THE COST OF EXHIBITING. AS FAR AS THE BULGARIAN MARKET IS CONCERNED, WHICH IS QUITE RESPECTABLE, EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT PLOVDIV IS THE PLACE WHERE THE BULGARIANS BUY.

5. WE BELIEVE THERE NEED NOT BE COMPETITION OR CONFLICT IN RECRUITING FOR PLOVDIV FAIR AND MOSCOW EXPOSITION OF FOOD PROCESSING AND PACKAGING EQUIPMENT. WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY DESPRED, BULGARIAN FREIGHT FORWARDERS, THAT DURING PLOVDIV FAIR PERIOD RAIL TRANSIT TIME FROM PLOVDIV TO MOSCOW IS 20 DAYS FOR FULL-CAR LOTS. THERE ARE THIRTY-FIVE DAYS BETWEEN END OF FAIR SEPTEMBER 10 AND BEGINNING OF MOSCOW EXPOSITION OCTOBER 15 FOR THOSE EXHIBITORS WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN BOTH.

6. WE CONSIDER IT UNDESIRABLE AND EVEN UNWISE TO SHIFT THEME AT THIS LATE DATE. SHOULD THAT BECOME ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, HOWEVER, WE WOULD CONSIDER EXPLORING WITH BULGARIANS THEMES OF EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES, NON-AUTOMOBILE TRANSPORTATION OR PLASTICS. HOWEVER, THIS MATTER SHOULD BE SETTLED BY THE TIME PLANAGAN GETS HERE. USEFULNESS OF HIS VISIT JANUARY 21 WOULD BE SERIOUSLY REDUCED IF IT APPEARED TO BULGARIAN CONTACTS WE STILL UNDECIDED ON THEME AT THIS LATE DATE.

7. IF PROBLEMS OF LAST YEAR ARE NOT TO BE REPEATED, IT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ESSENTIAL THAT DEFINITIVE DECISIONS ON US PARTICIPATION BE MADE AND RECRUITING BEGIN IMMEDIATELY. ALSO OFFICIAL WASHINGTON DECISION ON PARTICIPATION IS NEEDED TO PERMIT EMBASSY TO RESPOND TO FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTE INVITING US TO PARTICIPATE IN PLOVDIV FAIR (REFTEL C).
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